



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Blue Dog Statement on Health Care Reform Legislation in the House**

Washington, DC - Today, Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, Blue Dog Co-Chair for Administration, issued the following statement regarding the continued development of health care reform legislation in the House.

“The Blue Dogs have been successful in ensuring the House will have time to assess the committee products on health care reform, both in the House and the Senate, as there will be no vote on the House floor before August.

“Blue Dogs believe fundamental reform of our health care system is needed to control rising health care costs, increase quality and value, and improve access to coverage and care. Comprehensive health care reform must be deficit-neutral and bend the cost curve in the long run. We also believe health care reform must preserve patient choice of provider and maintain competition within the marketplace.

“Progress has been and will continue to be difficult, but getting it right is more important than getting it done right away or working on artificial timetables. Before the full House considers a bill, the Blue Dog Coalition will assess the scoring by the Congressional Budget Office and ensure it appropriately reflects the principles we have articulated. While it appears ongoing negotiations at the committee level have yielded a number of important concessions in the direction of our principles, many Blue Dogs remain concerned with various aspects of the bill draft. We remain committed to being a positive and productive influence in the process and improving the bill even further, including through the amendment process in committee.

“The 52-member Blue Dog Coalition has not taken a group position on the draft health care legislation that is working through the committee process. Today's announcement signifies that the committee process is moving forward. The committee will work its will, but the broader coalition has not ratified any agreements related to the draft legislation.”

*The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 52 members of the Blue Dog Coalition. For more information, visit the Blue Dog Website at <http://www.house.gov/melancon/BlueDogs/>.*